

Centre Policy for  
determining teacher  
assessed grades – summer  
2021:

The Howard School

Centre Number 61307

## Statement of intent

### **Statement of Intent**

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that teacher assessed grades are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across departments.
- To ensure the operation of effective processes with clear guidelines and support for staff.
- To ensure that all staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- To support teachers to take evidence-based decisions in line with Joint Council for Qualifications guidance.
- To ensure the consideration of historical centre data in the process, and the appropriate decision making in respect of, teacher assessed grades.
- To support a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of teacher assessed grades.
- To support our centre in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.
- To ensure our centre meets all requirements set out by the Department of Education, Ofqual, the Joint Council for Qualifications and awarding organisations for Summer 2021 qualifications.
- To ensure the process for communicating to candidates and their parents/carers how they will be assessed is clear, in order to give confidence.

## Roles and responsibilities

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Head of Centre**

- Our Head of Centre, Ms Cathy Reid, will be responsible for approving our policy for determining teacher assessed grades.
- Ms Reid has overall responsibility for The Howard School as an examinations centre and will ensure that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.
- Ms Reid will confirm that teacher assessed grade decisions represent the academic judgement made by teachers and that the checks in place ensure these align with the guidance on standards provided by awarding organisations.
- Ms Reid will ensure an internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.

#### **Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Department**

Our Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Departments will:

- provide training and support to our other staff.
- support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final teacher assessed grades.
- ensure an effective approach within and across departments.
- be responsible for ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it.
- ensure that all teachers within their department make consistent judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade.
- ensure all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control agreed and with reference to guidance provided by JCQ.
- ensure teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments.
- ensure that a Head of Department Checklist and the subject cohort assessment record is completed for each qualification that they lead. The assessment record will include a rationale for the selected evidence, levels of control, whether standardisation and moderation has been applied to each piece of evidence.

#### **Teachers/ AEN Coordinator**

Our teachers and AEN Coordinator will:

- ensure they conduct assessments with the levels of control agreed in department and have sufficient evidence, in line with this Centre Policy and guidance from the JCQ, to provide teacher assessed grades for each student they have entered for a qualification.
- ensure that the teacher assessed grade they assign to each student is a fair, valid, objective and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each student.
- make judgements based on what each student has been taught and what they have been assessed on, as outlined in the section on grading in the main JCQ guidance.
- produce a Learner portfolio of evidence with Assessment Record for each student, that includes the nature of the assessment evidence being used, evidence grades / scores and any other evidence that explains the determination of the final teacher assessed grades. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be recorded.

- Learner portfolios will be securely stored and enable the centre to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions for QA and appeal purposes.

**Examinations Officer**

Our Examinations Officer will:

- be responsible for the administration of our final teacher assessed grades and for managing the post-results services.

**Training, support and guidance**

**Training**

- Teachers involved in determining grades in our centre will attend centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students. Training will be provided on the following; objectivity; authenticity; guidance on grading for teachers (JCQ) including selecting and collection evaluating the quality of the evidence, retention of evidence & assigning a grade.
- Teachers will engage with the JCQ and awarding organisation grade level descriptors and exemplars at department level making holistic judgements based on the evidence of what students know and can do.

**Support for Newly Qualified Teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment**

- HODs will be responsible for allocating mentor support by experienced teachers to NQTs and teachers with little experience of assessment. Departments that have a number of experienced awarding organisation examiners should use these staff as mentors where possible.

## Use of appropriate evidence

### **A. Use of evidence**

- Teachers making judgements will have regard for the training received on recommended evidence (JCQ), and further guidance provided by awarding organisations.
- All candidate evidence produced from 8th March used to determine teacher assessed grades, and associated documentation, will be retained and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals. Where available prior evidence will also be retained
- We will use non-exam assessment work, even if this has not been fully completed in Art, Drama, 3D Design, Criminology & Photography.
- We will use student work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification that has been taught, that follow a similar format to awarding organisation materials, and have been marked in a way that reflects awarding organisation mark schemes. Centre devised tasks will be compiled using past paper examination questions including the 2020 exam series which is secure on all websites.
- We will where deemed appropriate by the HOD use class or homework evidence, including work that took place during remote learning, but with due regard to the level of control for that evidence noted.
- We will where deemed appropriate by the HOD use internal end of year / end of term / end of unit tests taken by pupils throughout the course
- We will use the mock exam series taken by students during the final year of study.
- We will use records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, and drama where deemed appropriate by the HOD.

We provide further detail in the following areas:

- HODs will produce additional assessment materials to give students the opportunity to show what they know, understand or can do in an area of content that has been taught but not yet assessed.
- HODs will use additional assessment materials to give students an opportunity to show improvement, for example, to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence or where an assessment is missing due to lockdown / isolation of cohorts.
- HODs will use additional assessment materials to support consistency of judgement between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete.
- HODs will combine and/or remove elements of questions where, for example, a multi-part question includes a part which focuses on an element of the specification that hasn't been taught.

Our centre will ensure the appropriateness of evidence and balance of evidence in arriving at grades in the following ways when completing the subject assessment record

- HODs will consider the level of control under which an assessment was completed, for example, whether the evidence was produced under high control and under supervision or at home.
- Teachers will ensure that we are able to authenticate the work as the student's own, especially where that work was not completed within the school or college.
- We will consider the limitations of assessing a student's performance when using assessments that have been completed more than once, or drafted and redrafted, where this is not a skill being assessed.
- We will consider the specification and assessment objective coverage of the assessment.
- We will consider the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.
- We will consider for older evidence the level of standardisation / moderation applied to the marking of that evidence.

## Determining teacher assessed grades

### **Awarding teacher assessed grades based on evidence**

- Our teachers will determine grades based on evidence which is commensurate with the standard at which a student is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills across the content of the course they have been taught.
- Our teachers will complete a TAG Portfolio record for each learner that states the evidence used and available in the portfolio, how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias. Any necessary variations for individual students including Access arrangement, Covid related issues beyond the rest of the cohort, circumstances of mitigation and special consideration.

## Internal quality assurance

### *Head of Centre Internal Quality Assurance and Declaration*

#### **Internal quality assurance**

- In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, we will ensure that our centre carries out an internal standardisation process for new pieces of evidence produced from March 2021.
- We will ensure that all teachers are provided with department level training and support to ensure they take a consistent approach to:
  - Arriving at teacher assessed grades
  - Reaching a holistic grading decision
  - Applying the use of grading support and documentation
- We will conduct internal random QA sampling across all grades and subjects at department level.
- We will ensure internal standardisation and moderation through discussion by teachers within the department to agree the awarding of TAGs of new pieces of evidence produced from 8th March.
- Where appropriate, we will amend individual grade decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by JCQ and awarding organisation(s) as part of our department level QA process, this will be recorded on the TAG Portfolio Record.
- Where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, then the output of this activity will be reviewed by an appropriate member of staff within the centre. This will normally be the SLT Line Manager.

## Comparison of teacher assessed grades to results for previous cohorts

<b>Comparison of Teacher Assessed Grades to results for previous cohorts</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We will compile information on the grades awarded to our students in the past June series in which exams took place in 2017, 2018 &amp; 2019. At department level we will compare percentage 4+, 5+ and 7+ or equivalent grades for A level and vocational courses.</li> <li>● We will consider the impact of cohort size both as a whole year group on headline figures and at subject cohort size which has varied from year to year in some subjects.</li> <li>● We will consider the stability of our centre’s overall grade outcomes from year to year and take into account the move to a three year Key Stage Four which is not evident in our prior data and early entry for English Literature also not evident in our prior outcomes.</li> <li>● We will consider both subject and centre level variation in our outcomes during the internal quality assurance process.</li> <li>● In the event of significant divergence from the qualifications-levels profiles attained in previous examined years, HODs will prepare a narrative on the outcomes of their review against historic data and will address the reasons for this divergence. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the QA process and will be recorded on the subject cohort TAG spreadsheet by the HOD.</li> <li>● SLT will prepare a narrative on the outcomes of our review against historic data of whole school headline measures. This will be produced as part of the whole school QA process.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Where TAGs are considered to be overly lenient or harsh, SLT will review the TAG justifications with the subject HOD. Only following discussion and if deemed necessary will we modify individual grades.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We will consider the change in our option process which reduced the size of the MFL cohort over the last three years, this has led to improved outcomes from 2020.</li> <li>● We will consider the impact of early entry in Year 10 for English Literature and the improved outcomes achieved as a result of that for English Language in Year 11 from 2020.</li> <li>● We will consider the change from GCSE PE to BTEC PE.</li> <li>● We will consider the change for BTEC Performing Arts to GCSE Drama.</li> <li>● We will consider the impact of overall cohort size that has increased year on year ranging from 202 in 2017 to 248 in current Year 11 2021</li> <li>● We will consider the impact on outcomes of the introduction of a three year key stage four as evidenced in final outcomes from 2020 onwards.</li> </ul>

## Access Arrangements and Special Considerations

<b>Reasonable adjustments and mitigating circumstances (special consideration)</b>



- Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments, we will make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken from 8th March. Staff have been issued a list of students.
- Where an assessment has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, we will note and take account of the absence of access arrangements or reasonable adjustment to our overall holistic judgement regarding the students TAG. This will be documented on the student TAG Portfolio record.
- Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments used in determining a student's standard of performance, we will take account of this when making judgements and record on the TAG Portfolio Record.
- To ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, we will ensure SLT and the exams officer have read and understood the document: [JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#). SLT will inform subject teachers which students require special consideration.

### Addressing disruption/differential lost learning (DLL)

#### **B. Addressing Disruption/Differentiated Lost Learning (DLL)**

- Teacher assessed grades will be determined based on evidence of the content that has been taught and assessed for each student.
- When assessing the suitability of evidence HODs will consider whether learning took place in school or remotely and the impact remote learning may have on the quality of that evidence.

## Objectivity

### **Objectivity**

To ensure objectivity, all staff involved in determining teacher assessed grades will be made aware through training that:

- unconscious bias can skew judgements;
- the evidence presented should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment;
- teacher assessed grades should not be influenced by candidates' positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or protected characteristics;
- unconscious bias is more likely to occur when quick opinions are formed

Our internal standardisation process will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process.

## Recording decisions and retention of evidence and data

### **C. Recording Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data**

- We will ensure that teachers and Heads of Departments maintain records that show how the teacher assessed grades were produced using the TAG Portfolio record and the Subject Assessment Record.
- We will ensure that evidence is where possible, drawn from a variety of tasks to develop a holistic view of each student's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of content taught.
- We will record accurately and secure retention of the evidence used to make decisions from 8th March 2021
  - Teacher level - TAG Portfolio Evidence sheet which will include evidence, TAG justification, any special consideration, access arrangements etc, department level QA sign off.
  - HOD level - assessment record and checklist to review quality of cohort evidence and QA sign off by SLT Line Manager
  - Cohort Subject spreadsheets to review outcomes against prior data with justification of any significant changes
  - Cohort headline data spreadsheet to review outcomes against prior data with justification for any significant changes,
- We will comply with our obligations regarding data protection legislation.
- We will ensure that the grades accurately reflect the evidence submitted.
- We will ensure that evidence is retained electronically or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisation(s) for all evidence produced from 8th March 2021.
- Where historic evidence is no longer available we will retain evidence of the mark record / book.

## Authenticating evidence

### **D. Authenticating evidence**

This section of our Centre Policy details the mechanisms in place to ensure that teachers are confident in the authenticity of evidence, and the process for dealing with cases where evidence is not thought to be authentic.

- A teacher should be confident the evidence is the students own work. Where there is any doubt of authenticity the teacher must refer the evidence to the HoD who will investigate and make a decision regarding suitability of including the evidence in the holistic judgement,

## Confidentiality, malpractice and conflicts of interest

### **A. Confidentiality**

- All staff involved have been made aware of the need to maintain the confidentiality of teacher assessed grades.
- All teaching staff have been briefed on the requirement to share details of the range of evidence on which students' grades will be based, while ensuring that details of the final grades remain confidential.
- Relevant details from this Policy, including requirements around sharing details of evidence and the confidentiality requirements, have been shared with parents/guardians.

### **B. Malpractice**

- Our general centre policies regarding malpractice, maladministration and conflicts of interest have been reviewed to ensure they address the specific challenges of delivery in Summer 2021.
- All staff involved have been made aware of these policies, and have received training in them as necessary.
- The consequences of malpractice or maladministration as published in the JCQ guidance: [JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures](#) and including the risk of a delay to students receiving their grades, up to, and including, removal of centre status have been outlined to all relevant staff.

### **C. Conflicts of Interest**

- To protect the integrity of assessments, all staff involved in the determination of grades must declare any conflict of interest such as relationships with students to our Head of Centre for further consideration in accordance with our centre Conflict of Interest policy.

- Our Head of Centre will take appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest arising with centre staff in accordance with the JCQ documents - [General Regulations for Approved Centres, 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021](#).
- We will also carefully consider the need to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.

## Private candidates

### **A. Private Candidates**

This section details our approach to providing and quality assuring grades to Private Candidates.

- Where it has been necessary to utilise different approaches, the **JCQ Guidance on Private Candidates** has been followed.
- In undertaking the review of cohort grades in conjunction with our centre results profiles from previous examined years, the grades determined by our centre for Private Candidates have been excluded from our analysis.

## External Quality Assurance

### **A. External Quality Assurance**

- All staff involved have been made aware of the awarding organisation requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the **JCQ Guidance**.
- All necessary records of decision-making in relation to determining grades have been properly kept and can be made available for review as required.
- All student evidence produced since the 8th March 2021 on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been made are retained and can be made available for review as required.
- Instances where student evidence used to decide teacher assessed grades is not available, for example where the material has previously been returned to students and cannot now be retrieved, will be clearly recorded on the TAG Portfolio Record.
- HOC, Exams Officer and SLT have been briefed on the possibility of interaction with awarding organisations during the different stages of the External Quality Assurance process and can respond promptly and fully to enquiries, including attendance at Virtual Visits should this prove necessary.
- Arrangements are in place to respond fully and promptly to any additional requirements/reviews that may be identified as a result of the External Quality Assurance process.
- Staff have been made aware that a failure to respond fully and effectively to such additional requirements may result in further action by the awarding organisations, including the withholding of results.

## Results

### **A. Results**

- All staff involved will be made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in Summer 2021, including the issuing of A/AS and GCSE results in the same week.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure the necessary staffing, including exams office and support staff, to enable the efficient receipt and release of results to our students.
- Arrangements will be in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance and support, including pastoral support, to students on receipt of their results.
- Such guidance will include advice on the appeals process in place in 2021 (see below).
- Appropriate staff will be available to respond promptly to any requests for information from awarding organisations, for example regarding missing or incomplete results, to enable such issues to be swiftly resolved.
- Parents/guardians will be made aware of arrangements for results days.

## Appeals

### **A. Appeals**

- All staff involved will be made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in Summer 2021, as set out in the **JCQ Guidance**.
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.
- All necessary staff will be briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.
- Learners will be appropriately guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.
- Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations, including any priority appeals, for example those on which university places depend.
- Arrangements will be in place to obtain the written consent of students to the initiation of appeals, and to record their awareness that grades may go down as well as up on appeal.
- Appropriate information on the appeals process will be provided to parents/carers.